MARVEL
CONAN THE KING
$1.50 US
$2.00 CAN
47
JUL
UK 50p
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY

"KNOW YE, O PRINCE, THAT CALIASTROS SAW HIS DREAMS OF CONQUEST DIE ALONG WITH THE ARMIES OF KOTH AND OPHIR THAT SACRIFICED THEMSELVES BEFORE THE WALLS OF ARBITANA RATHER THAN YIELD TO KING CONAN'S HOST. ONLY THE MAGE'S WORST NIGHTMARES LIVED ON TO HAUNT HIM."

--FROM THE NEMEDIAN CHRONICLES

TELL ME AGAIN ABOUT YOUR PROMISE OF VICTORY, CALIASTROS. I WANT TO HEAR IT ONE MORE TIME!

SILENCE, WOMAN! SHOW A LITTLE RESPECT FOR THE SOLDIERS WHO ARE DYING FOR US. MANY OF THEM WERE *YOUR* SOLDIERS!

OF DEATH AND THE DREAMER

DON KRAAR STORY | TONY DeZUNIGA ART | RICK PARKER LETTERS | GEORGE ROUSSOS COLOR | MICHAEL HIGGINS EDITOR | TOM DeFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

CONAN THE KING ™ Vol. 1, No. 47, July, 1988. (U.S.P.S. 589-610) Published by MARVEL COMICS, A NEW WORLD COMPANY. James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.** Published bi-monthly. Copyright © 1988 by Conan Properties, Inc. CONAN THE KING (including all prominent characters featured in this issue) and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Conan Properties, Inc. All advertising and editorial material copyright © 1988 by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.50 per copy in the U.S. and $2.00 in Canada. Subscription rate $18.00 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign, $20.00. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 10TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.**

HERE THEY COME AGAIN, PALLANTIDES-- READY OUR MEN.

BEFORE THE WALLS OF ARBITANA, CROWN CITY OF CORINTHIA, CONAN'S ARMY HAS TRAPPED THE ALLIED ARMIES OF KOTH AND OPHIR AFTER THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY CLOSED THE CITY GATES AGAINST THEM.

HAVING SPURNED CONAN'S OFFER OF QUARTER AFTER PRINCE CONN SLEW THE WARLORD OF KOTH, THE SURVIVORS OF THE KOTHIAN AND OPHIRIAN ARMIES SACRIFICE THEMSELVES IN A SUICIDE CHARGE.

AND, IN THE AQUILONIAN RANKS, HARDENED VETERANS ARE SICKENED BY THEIR GRIM DUTY...

HOLD YOUR ARROWS, LADS. PICK YOUR TARGETS AND WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL.

MITRA'S BEARD, LOOK AT 'EM! THEY'RE HUNGRY TO DIE!

STEADY...

AS THE KOTHIANS AND OPHIRIANS CHARGE UP THE AQUILONIANS RELEASE THEIR SHAFTS.

LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER, NOT ONE OF THE ENEMY IS LEFT ALIVE...

I'VE SEEN ENOUGH, FATHER.

AYE.

"...CONQUEST AND EMPIRE... VICTORY OR DEATH..."

A COURIER FROM TARANTIA APPROACHES, FATHER. NEWS FROM HOME!

YOUR MAJESTY, URGENT NEWS!

COME FORWARD.

HERE, LAD, GIVE IT TO ME!

IT IS FOR THE KING'S EYES ONLY, GENERAL PALLANTIDES.

READ IT TO ME, PALLANTIDES.

NO, CONAN. PUBLIUS INTENDED IT FOR YOU.

READ IT QUICKLY, FATHER.

CONN, TELL DERYCK THAT RADEGUND HAS BORNE HIM A SON...

AND WHAT ABOUT MY MOTHER, THE QUEEN?

HER CHILD WAS STILLBORN. IT WAS A BOY. PUBLIUS SAYS IT WAS THE WORK OF BLACK MAGIC.

CALIASTROS.

CAPTAINS, THANK THE GODS FOR VICTORY!! TELL THE MEN THAT *THE KING HAS A GRANDSON*-- AN HEIR TO THE THRONE OF ASGARD! BUT QUEEN ZENOBIA LOST HER CHILD-- *CALIASTROS HAS KILLED MY SON!*

TELL THEM THAT THE MAN WHO BRINGS ME CALIASTROS'S HEAD CAN NAME HIS OWN REWARD!

IT IS MY FAULT, O KING! I BROUGHT YOU INTO CONFLICT WITH CALIASTROS.

WHAT'S DONE IS DONE, RUFIO.

AYE!

CALIASTROS SHALL DIE!

DEATH TO CALIASTROS!

PRINCESS ILIA OF CORINTHIA IS ESCORTED INTO THE CITY OF ARBITANA BY A COLUMN OF CORINTHIAN KNIGHTS LED BY PRINCE CONN AND RUFIO...

AT LEAST OUR BLIND PRINCESS IS SAVED FROM THE SIGHT OF THE CARNAGE AROUND US.

ILIA!

THEY HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ME!

HOW COULD ANYONE, MY PRINCESS?

SOME OF THE CORINTHIAN TROOPS REMAINED LOYAL TO CALIASTROS. IT WAS CORINTHIAN AGAINST CORINTHIAN BEFORE WE CLOSED THE GATES TO THE KOTHIANS AND OPHIRIANS.

LEAVE THEN, LEORA!

CONAN WILL FIND US BOTH EVENTUALLY.

BUT HE WON'T EXPECT ME TO GO TO TARANTIA. I'LL BE IN THE HEART OF HIS OWN DOMAIN -- I'LL *HAVE* MY *REVENGE!*

BEYOND THE LABYRINTH 'NEATH THE ROYAL PALACE OF CORINTHIA...

GO, MY CHARMING VIPER. MAKE CONAN SUFFER IN YOUR WAY AND I'LL MAKE HIM SUFFER IN MINE.

NOW I MUST CONCENTRATE ALL MY FORCES...

CALIASTROS...

YOU!

THE SAME DREAM... THE SAME NIGHTMARE... EVERY TIME I CLOSE MY EYES AND TRY TO REST...

I SHALL CAST A FINAL SPELL ON THE CIMMERIAN USURPER!

AH, THE TOMBS OF THE ANCIENT CORINTHIAN KINGS. I SHALL ENLIST THEIR AID TO MY CAUSE!!

SO, THIS IS WHERE THEY BURIED MY OLD ENEMY, AECHIDES! I HAVE USE FOR THESE OTHERS, BUT AECHIDES SHALL **SLEEP ON!**

CONAN SHALL FIND HIS WAY THROUGH THE LABYRINTH -- THAT'S FOR CERTAIN -- THEN THESE STONE EFFIGIES SHALL...

RISE UP!

FOR ALL BUT **YOU AECHIDES**, I'LL LET YOUR STONE EFFIGY **REST**, UNDISTURBED.

THESE OTHERS WILL SERVE ME!

IN THE ROYAL PALACE ABOVE...

THAT MONSTER, CALIASTROS, HAS SLIPPED THROUGH OUR FINGERS.

HE CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR, RUFIO.

I'LL HUNT HIM AND I'LL FIND HIM, CONN. YOU'RE GOING BACK TO TARANTIA.

FATHER, I HAVE A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH THAT OLD CARRION-EATER.

LEAVE THAT TO ME. YOU TAKE PRINCESS ILIA BACK TO TARANTIA!

TELL YOUR MOTHER I SHALL SOON RETURN!

HERE'S THE SECRET PASSAGE INTO THE LABYRINTH. CALIASTROS MUST BE HERE!

WE KNOW THOSE PASSAGES WELL, KING CONAN.

DEMITES, YOU AND RUFIO SHALL GUIDE ME.

I SHALL FACE THIS CALIASTROS.

I WONDER WHAT MAGIC CALIASTROS WILL USE ON US!

NONE THAT WILL SAVE HIS LIFE.

DEEP BENEATH THE PALACE CALIASTROS COMPLETES HIS SPELL

RISE UP, MEN OF STONE, YOUR TASK AWAITS YOU!

ALL BUT AECHIDES-- THE DEAD KING AECHIDES WHOM I LAID TO REST FOR ETERNITY!

FOLLOW ME, MY STONY SLAVES! THE SPELL WILL MAKE YOUR LIMBS GROW SUPPLE!

YES - A FORMATION OF STATUES UPON THE BRIDGEWORKS!

DEEP WITHIN THE LABYRINTH

THERE, YOUR MAJESTY! THE PHOSPHORUS-COVERED WALLS WILL LEAD US TO THE STRONGHOLD WHERE WE GUARDED THE ROYAL FAMILY. CALIASTROS MUST BE WITHIN.

LEAD ON DEM TES!

KING CONAN FORGIVE ME FOR GETTING YOU INVOLVED IN THIS!

NO REGRETS, RUFIO. CALIASTROS IS MAD! HE WOULD HAVE SOUGHT ME ON HIS OWN!

THERE -- JUST AS I TOLD YOU!

THE WALLS GLOW IN THE DARK, WE'RE NOT FAR FROM THE STRONGHOLD NOW

THERE! HOW REGAL YOU LOOK, HA-HA-HA! JUST THE KIND OF WELCOMING COMMITTEE A CONQUERING MONARCH LIKE CONAN DESERVES!

NOW TO CONSULT THE FATES AND LEARN WHAT HAS BECOME OF MY DEAR PRINCESS QUEEN ELGA. THE SHREW!

" AND PRINCE CONN... HOW HE EMBODIES ALL THE MANLY VIRTUES. I'M SURE THAT EVEN THE PRINCESS IN HER BLINDNESS IS AWARE OF THAT. I'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR THEM LATER ON... "

" AH, HOW TOUCHING! PRINCESS ILIA, ON THE [illegible] CONAN'S PROTECTION, NO DOUBT.

PRINCE CONN PILGRIMS ON OUR WAY TO THE TEMPLE OF ASURA IN TARANTIA. WE BEG PERMISSION TO JOIN YOUR PARTY FOR PROTECTION

VERY WELL MY FRIEND PERMISSION GRANTED

AH NOW THERE IS A PLACE IN MORE TO MY LIKING STEALTH BECOMES HER."

"AND SHE TAKES A VICTIM IN HER OWN CRUSADE!

"... SO, LEORA YOU'VE FOUND SAFE CONDUCT TO TARANTIA. MAY YOUR REVENGE BE COMPLETE!

TOGETHER, EACH OF US IN OUR SEPARATE WAYS WILL CAUSE MORE GRIEF FOR CONAN AND HIS FAMILY THAN THEY EVER COULD HAVE IMAGINED. HE'LL FIND THAT THE STING OF A DYING SCORPION IS THE MOST DEADLY!

THIS IS THE STRONGHOLD?

THIS IS CALIASTROS'S WORK! I CAN FEEL HIS PRESENCE.

LET'S CROSS THE BRIDGE

I'M NOT AS YOUNG OR AS QUICK AS I USED TO BE, BUT I CAN STILL MOVE FASTER THAN MEN OF STONE

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE CALASTRO'S KING CONAN HE'LL BE WAITING FOR US BEYOND THOSE GATES

LET'S GO!

HE WON'T BE WAITING LONG

THEY'RE FASTER THAN I THOUGHT.

KEEP MOVING! DON'T LET THEM CORNER YOU!

RUFIO--FIND CALIASTROS!

AYE, YOUR MAJESTY! I SHALL DRIVE MY DAGGER INTO HIS VILE HEART!

DEMITES! DON'T LET THEM CORNER YOU!

THAT'S EASIER SAID THAN DONE KING OLMAN!

THESE STONE WEAPONS OF THEIRS ARE BRITTLE! THEY MAY BE ABLE TO BASH YOUR HEAD IN, BUT THEY CANNOT SLICE IT OFF!

MITRA, LEAD ME TO CALIASTROS AND GIVE ME A CHANCE TO AVENGE THE DEATH OF KING AECHIDES AND THE BLINDING OF PRINCESS ILIA

THIS WAY, RUFIO MITRA CANNOT HELP YOU NOW

CALIASTROS, I'VE WAITED MORE THAN FIVE YEARS FOR THIS. KING AECHIDES SHALL REST EASY SOON!

FIVE YEARS IS A LONG TIME TO WAIT FOR YOUR OWN POINTLESS DEATH, JESTER BUT THEN, YOU ALWAYS WERE A NOBLE FOOL.

I SWORE I'D BE THE DEATH OF YOU!

DID YOU KNOW I WOULD COME FOR YOU?

I HAVE FORESEEN THIS MOMENT! I AM READY--BUT I AM NOT READY TO DIE!

THERE

BEAT ME

DEMITES, LOOK OUT!

AGHHHH

CALIASTROS! I M COM NG FOR YOU!

CALIASTROS! CALL OFF THESE STATUES! FACE ME YOURSELF!

SUDDENLY THE STONE STATUES OF KINGS COME TO A HALT CALIASTROS'S CONCENTRATION HAS BEEN DISTRACTED BY THE NEED TO CAST ANOTHER SPELL

THAT'S WHY THEY STOPPED—NOT EVEN CALIASTRO'S CAN CAST TWO SPELLS AT THE SAME TIME

RUFIO, GET AWAY FROM HIM!

COME ON BOTH OF YOU! I'LL ROAST YOU BOTH IN AGONY!

YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THIS TIME CALIASTROS!

IT WON'T BE YOU WHO SLAYS ME, JESTER!

CALIASTROS! AT LAST WE MEET

AH, KING CONAN--OUR FIRST AND LAST MEETING! YOU'RE GOING TO BURN JUST LIKE THIS FOOL AT MY FEET!

YOU HAVE MUCH TO ANSWER FOR, MAGICIAN!

COME TO ME, CIMMERIAN

CROM!

THERE-- THAT'S JUST A TASTE OF MY POWER BEFORE LONG YOU'LL DRINK IN ITS FULL FURY.

I WAS FOREWARNED OF YOUR COMING, CONAN. I SAW IT IN MY DREAMS YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY HERE TO KILL ME, UNLESS I DESTROYED YOU FIRST.

QUICKLY, KING CONAN GET BEHIND THE PILLAR I'LL TRY TO BUY YOU A LITTLE TIME

CROM AND MITRA, WHAT IS HE DOING?

BURNING YOU ALIVE, IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL. IT'S HIS FAVORITE SPELL - THE SAME ONE HE USED TO MURDER KING AECHIDES.

BUT I MEAN TO SEE THAT HE PAYS FOR IT.

RUFIO, IT SEEMS THAT I AM NOT FINISHED WITH YOU YET

YOU'LL BE FINISHED SOON, CALIASTROS-- FINISHED WITH THIS LIFE!

SUCH BOLD WORDS, JESTER!

I SWORE I'D BE THE DEATH OF YOU, MAGICIAN, EVEN IF IT COSTS ME MY LIFE!

AGHHHHEEEEEE...

THAT IT MOST CERTAINLY WILL, RUFIO. BUT IF YOU WANT TO TAKE VENGEANCE ON ME, YOU'LL HAVE TO DO IT IN THE NEXT WORLD.

THAT WASN'T SUFFICIENT WAS IT? LET ME SEE WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT THAT. YES, INDEED, I WON'T LEAVE THE TASK HALF DONE THIS TIME

WITHIN THE TOMB OF THE KINGS OF CORINTHIA, A STONE FIGURE RISES FROM ITS BIER

FAREWELL, RUFIO, ONCE AND FOR ALL. YOU WON'T HAUNT MY DREAMS ANY LONGER. YOU CAN JOIN YOUR FORMER MASTER, KING AECHIDES, WHEREVER HE HOLDS COURT NOW.

AND YOU CAN JOIN THEM BOTH, YOU VULTURE! I TOLD YOU THAT YOU HAVE MUCH TO ANSWER FOR AND I MEAN TO SEE THAT YOU PAY!

YOU'RE FAR TOO IMPETUOUS FOR A MAN OF YOUR YEARS, CONAN. MY DREAMS HAVE SHOWN ME HOW TO CHEAT FATE. DO YOU THINK I'LL FAIL WHEN I'M SO CLOSE?

NO--THERE'S NO RISK OF FAILURE THIS TIME. ONLY ONE OF US WILL WALK OUT OF THIS PLACE.

UGHHH...

YOU'RE AN ARROGANT MEDMAN CALIASTRO, DO YOU THINK YOUR MAGIC CAN KEEP ME AT BAY FOREVER?

THERE--I FEEL YOUR BLOOD BEGIN TO BOIL BARBARIAN NO, I DON'T NEED TO HOLD YOU OFF FOREVER--JUST LONG ENOUGH TO KILL YOU!

YOU'RE POWERLESS NOW GREAT KIN, JUST LIKE SO MANY OTHERS WHO TRIED TO OPPOSE ME. AND YOUR PRECIOUS JESTER ISN'T HERE TO HELP YOU.

CROM'S CURSE ON YOU! IF I GET MY HANDS ON YOUR THROAT IT WON'T MATTER WHAT YOU DO.

CALIASTROS, THERE IS A FATE THAT YOU CANNOT CHEAT. THE DAY OF RECKONING HAS COME.

THAT VOICE. I KNOW IT. BUT HOW?

AECHIDES--! NO, THE SPELL WAS NEVER INTENDED TO INCLUDE YOUR EFFIGY!

GO BACK! I COMMAND IT! GO BACK!

TOO LATE, TRAITOR! YOU'VE TAMPERED WITH FORCES THAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL!

ACCH,. NO, NO...

I ..CAN STILL DESTROY YOU WITH THE FIRE OF MY MAGIC!

THEN DO SO, CALIASTROS. YOU WILL BE YOUR OWN EXECUTIONER.

YES THIS STONE CAN BREAK APART FROM THE HEAT YOU CREATE BUT IT'S ALREADY SETTING YOUR ROBE ON FIRE

YOU'RE ONLY A MOMENT AWAY FROM JOINING ME IN DEATH, CALIASTROS.

CROM'S BLOOD. IT TOOK THE STATUE OF A DEAD MAN TO GIVE CALIASTROS WHAT HE DESERVES

AGGHH...

BY THE GODS, I COULD HEAR HIS DEATH RATTLE THROUGH THE CRACKLE OF THE FLAMES.

ZENOBIA, OUR CHILD IS AVENGED.

RUFIO, YOUR VENGEANCE IS COMPLETE. MAY YOU REST EASY

GOODBYE, MY FRIEND.

ON THE ROAD OF KINGS, PRINCE CONN LEADS THE PARTY BOUND FOR TARANTIA

THERE'S A CHILL IN THE AIR. DERYCK IT LOOKS LIKE AN EARLY WINTER

YOU HAVEN'T HEARD A WORD I'VE SAID, HAVE YOU?

MY THOUGHTS ARE WITH RADEGUND AND OUR SON CONN I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO SEE THEM

THEN DON'T WASTE ANY MORE TIME. RIDE ON AHEAD AND TELL THEM THAT WE'RE COMING.

BY YMIR I WILL TAKE CARE OF ILIA, CONN SHE LOVES YOU THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT

I'LL GET Y IN TARANTIA, CONN

THE WIND FEELS SO STRANGE SO DIFFERENT LIKE WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.

WINTER'S COMING ON MY PRINCESS, THE SAME AS IT DOES EVERY YEAR ONLY THIS TIME IT'S COMING A LITTLE SOONER

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, PRINCESS ILIA?

YES YES, I FEEL FINE IT'S JUST THAT THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE AIR... I CAN FEEL IT

I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.

WHENEVER WINTER CAME.

.. I LOVED THE WAY IT FELT

WHEN THE SNOWFLAKES HIT MY FACE.

AND NOW, I CAN SEE THEM!

I CAN SEE THEM! DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS?

SOMEONE BRING PRINCE CONN I THINK THE PRINCESS ILIA IS DELIRIOUS!

NO NO DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I CAN SEE! AND THAT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING!

...CALIASTROS IS DEAD! THE SPELL HAS BEEN BROKEN! KING CONAN AND RUFIO MUST HAVE KILLED HIM!

AYE MY PRINCESS-- WHATEVER YOU SAY.

GET PRINCE CONN RIGHT AWAY!

ILIA WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHY ARE YOU ACTING SO STRANGELY?

BECAUSE CALIASTROS IS DEAD, THAT'S WHY! YOUR FATHER AND RUFIO MUST HAVE SLAIN HIM!

OH CONN, YOU'RE HANDSOME. VERY VERY HANDSOME

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ILIA? HOW CAN YOU KNOW CALIASTROS IS DEAD?

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT I LOOK LIKE? YOU COULDN'T. UNLESS.. YOU...

UNLESS I COULD SEE... YES, I CAN SEE

DAYS LATER ON THE ROAD OF KINGS, KING CONAN MAKES HIS WAY TO TARANTIA...

AN EARLY WINTER - THAT MEANS A BAD HARVEST OR NO HARVEST AT ALL IT'LL BE HARD TIMES IN AQUILONIA

BUT I'LL FACE THAT WHEN THE TIME COMES ZENOBIA MUST BE MY FIRST CONCERN I'LL BE GLAD TO TELL HER THAT I'VE AVENGED OUR CHILD

IN TARANTIA, NO HERO'S WELCOME AWAITS THE KING'S RETURN...

WE PAID A HIGH PRICE TO FIGHT THIS WAR I CAN SEE IT IN THE FACES OF THE PEOPLE.

LOOK, THERE HE IS -- THE KING WHO LED YOUR FATHER TO HIS DEATH

CONAN THE KING... CONAN THE CONQUEROR CONAN THE BARBARIAN ROGUE WHO USURPED THE THRONE AND LED MY HUSBANDS AND SONS TO THEIR DEATHS.

LET ME PAY MY RESPECTS TO HIS MAJESTY!

TYRANT BUTCHER!

CROM AND YMIR, WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, WOMAN?

SEIZE HER!

WE'LL TEACH YOU TO SHOW MORE RESPECT TO THE KING WHEN WE HAVE YOU IN THE DUNGEON, HAG!

THERE'S NOTHING THAT YOU CAN DO TO ME THAT KING CONAN HASN'T ALREADY DONE. I'M ALONE, FRIENDLESS, MY FAMILY IS DEAD, AND I'M DESTITUTE. THAT'S THE LEGACY OF CONAN'S CONQUEST.

LET HER GO! IF THIS IS HOW THE PEOPLE'S MOOD HAS CHANGED, IT'S BETTER TO LEARN ABOUT IT THIS WAY THAN FROM AN ASSASSIN'S BLADE.

YOU'RE MAGNANIMOUS, CONAN. YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN KINDLER TO KILL ME.

THE CITY HAS THE GLOOM OF THE GRAVE ABOUT IT. I DOUBT THAT THE PALACE WILL BE ANY BETTER.

WHERE IS SHE?

THE QUEEN IS IN HER CHAMBERS, MY KING. SHE'S BEEN WAITING FOR YOU FOR DAYS.

BE GENTLE WITH HER, FATHER. MY MOTHER'S GRIEF IS A PAINFUL THING TO SEE. SHE NEEDS COMFORT AND SUPPORT NOW.

SO, YOU'VE RETURNED AT LAST. YOU TOOK YOUR TIME ABOUT IT. THERE'S SNOW ALREADY ON THE GROUND

ZENOBIA, I CAME AS SOON AS I COULD. I COULDN'T AFFORD TO LEAVE A DANGEROUS ENEMY LIKE CALIASTROS AT MY BACK. IF I'D LET HIM LIVE HE COULD HAVE BEEN A THREAT TO US AGAIN

BUT I WATCHED HIM DIE. OUR CHILD HAS BEEN AVENGED AND WE HAVE PEACE NOW.

NO, DON'T

DON'T TOUCH ME! YOU DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT. YOU WEREN'T HERE WHEN I NEEDED YOU. YOU NEVER HAVE BEEN

CROM, WOMAN! I CAN'T BE IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE!

GET AWAY FROM ME. IT'S FINISHED BETWEEN US. I WON'T BE YOUR WIFE ANY MORE. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO BEAR CHILDREN AGAIN.

ZENOBIA, I'VE DONE ALL I KNOW HOW TO DO. DON'T ASK ME TO BE SOMETHING OTHER THAN WHAT I AM

IN THE ROYAL CRYPT BENEATH THE PALACE.

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A BOY, CONAN. I'M SORRY, MY FRIEND. I KNOW HOW MUCH IT MEANT TO YOU AND ZENOBIA.

AYE, TROCERO. I ONLY WISH ZENOBIA WOULD BELIEVE HOW MUCH IT MEANT TO ME.

IF I'D ONLY LISTENED TO HADRATHUS THIS WOULD'VE NEVER HAPPENED!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, PUBLIUS?

HADRATHUS TRIED TO WARN ME ABOUT CALIASTROS' BUT I WOULDN'T LISTEN. IT WAS HE AND THE ASURANS WHO SAVED RADEGUND AND HER CHILD. THEY COULD HAVE SAVED YOUR SON IF ONLY I HAD LET THEM.

I BETRAYED YOUR TRUST, CONAN, BUT I'LL ATONE FOR IT WITH MY LIFE

PUBLIUS HAVE YOU GONE MAD?

STOP IT, PUBLIUS THIS WON'T SOLVE ANYTHING. IT WON'T BRING THE CHILD BACK.

THEN WHAT CAN I EVER DO TO MAKE UP FOR IT?

LIVE--LIVE AND LEARN LIKE THE REST OF US. THAT'S MY COMMAND TO YOU

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT HE'D TRY SOMETHING LIKE THIS. HE'S BEEN BROODING FOR DAYS

WHAT HAPPENS NOW TROCERO?

WE GROW OLDER AND THEN WE DIE PUBLIUS

WHO WAS THAT ON THE STAIRS?

I DIDN'T SEE ANYONE, CONAN

WELL, I DID SOMEONE WAS WATCHING US

I'VE SEEN ENOUGH OF DEATH TO LAST ME A LONG TIME. ISN'T THERE ANY GOOD NEWS AT THIS COURT?

FATHER, PRINCESS ILIA HAS SOMETHING TO TELL YOU

AND THEN WE HAVE SOMEONE WE WANT YOU TO MEET

KING CONAN, I KNEW THAT YOU AND RUFIO HAD SLAIN CALIASTROS WHEN YOU DID, THE SPELL WAS LIFTED. NOW I CAN SEE YOU FOR THE FIRST TIME -- AND THANK YOU

THE CREDIT DOESN'T BELONG TO ME, ILIA. ONE DAY I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT BUT FOR NOW, THERE'S SOMETHING THAT YOU MUST KNOW

..RUFIO IS DEAD SLAIN BY CALIASTROS' MAGIC BUT HE DIED TRYING TO AVENGE WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

FATHER, THIS IS ROLF YOUR GRANDSON. WON'T YOU LOOK AT HIM? HE HAS YOUR EYES.

NOT NOW, RADEGUND, I'M TIRED

MY NIECE THERE ARE MATTERS OF STATE THAT REQUIRE YOUR ATTENTION. THE TREASURY IS NEARLY EMPTY. THE CROPS HAVE FAILED

WON'T YOU JUST LOOK AT YOUR GRANDSON, FATHER?

ENOUGH! THAT'S ENOUGH FROM ALL OF YOU! I'M SICK OF MATTERS OF STATE! I'M SICK OF ALL OF IT!

KING CONAN, OUR CIMMERIAN AND AESIRIAN ALLIES HAVE GONE ON A RAMPAGE, PILLAGING HYPERBOREA AND BRYTHUNIA AFTER THEY HAVE SUED FOR PEACE. THE MATTER IS OUT OF CONTROL...

"CONTROL!"! DON'T TELL ME ABOUT CONTROL! I CAN'T CONTROL THIS KINGDOM! I CAN'T CONTROL THIS EMPIRE WE HAVE!

FATHER, WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE IT S TOO LATE PLEASE BE REASONABLE

"REASONABLE"? I'M A KING, I DON'T HAVE TO BE REASONABLE!

NO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING, NOT EVEN LOOK AT YOUR OWN GRANDSON

RADEGUND, WE'RE LEAVING WE LL START FOR ASGARD IN THE MORNING.

YOUR FATHER IS AS STUBBORN AS A CIMMERIAN BULL RADEGUND

YES HE S JUST LIKE YOU DERYCK. IF I HAVE MY WAY OUR SON WON'T GROW UP TO BE LIKE EITHER OF YOU

QUEEN RADEGUND, HADRATHUS SENT ME TO SERVE YOU AND YOUR CHILD. I AM CALLED LEA

HADRATHUS SENT YOU LEA? THAT'S STRANGE, HE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT IT BUT I KNOW BETTER THAN TO IGNORE HIM.

COME ALONG LEA

THAT VOICE-- I KNOW IT! NO TWO VOICES ARE ALIKE TO SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN BLIND THEY'RE AS DIFFERENT AS... SNOWFLAKES.

..QUEEN LEORA, MY MOTHER'S MURDERER!

I'LL GET TO RADEGUND, ILIA! WARN MY FATHER AND TELL HIM TO FOLLOW ME!

IF HE WILL LISTEN, CONN

ALL RIGHT, SERVIUS. I'LL DEAL WITH THE CIMMERIANS. I'LL ASK DERYCK TO DEAL WITH THE AESIR.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE KING CONAN I'VE KNOWN ALL THESE YEARS.

KING CONAN, QUEEN LEORA IS IN THE PALACE. I THINK SHE MEANS TO HARM RADEGUND AND YOUR GRANDSON! YOU'VE GOT TO HURRY!

QUEEN LEORA--!! ARE YOU CERTAIN, ILIA?

IN RADEGUND'S BEDCHAMBER...

IT SEEMS STRANGE THAT HADRATHUS WOULDN'T HAVE INTRODUCED YOU TO ME PERSONALLY. BUT IF YOU'RE SOMEONE HE TRUSTS, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

HE'S A BEAUTIFUL CHILD, QUEEN RADEGUND. CONAN'S GRANDSON AND THE HEIR TO THE THRONE OF ASGARD...

...WHAT A SHAME HE'LL NEVER LIVE TO SIT ON IT!

NO!

BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S LEORA? YOU COULDN'T EVEN HAVE SEEN WHAT SHE LOOKED LIKE.

LEORA MURDERED MY MOTHER! I'D KNOW HER VOICE ANYWHERE! GO, BEFORE SHE MURDERS YOUR DAUGHTER AND GRANDCHILD!

RADEGUND! RADEGUND, IT'S CONN! OPEN THE DOOR!

IT'S BOLTED FROM THE INSIDE, MY PRINCE!

GET OUT OF MY WAY, ALL OF YOU!

LEORA, IT'S TIME I PAID YOU WHAT I OWE YOU!

FIRST YOU AND THEN YOUR SON... AND THEN MY VENGEANCE ON CONAN'S HOUSE WILL BE COMPLETE!

LEORA, SHOW YOURSELF AND I'LL CARVE YOU INTO CROW BAIT, EVEN IF THE GODS STRIKE ME DEAD FOR IT!

RADEGUND, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

CROM AND MITRA...

NEVER BETTER, FATHER. QUEEN LEORA WON'T TROUBLE US AGAIN.

SHE FORGOT THAT IF SHE WANTED TO KILL CONAN'S GRANDSON, SHE'D HAVE TO DEAL WITH CONAN'S DAUGHTER FIRST.

ROLF NEVER EVEN MADE A SOUND.

OF COURSE NOT! HE'S MY GRANDSON!

CROM'S BEARD, HE'S GOT MY EYES! I'LL LAY ODDS THAT NONE OF YOU EVEN NOTICED THAT! *BY THE GODS, HE REMINDS ME OF ME!*

FIN

KING CONAN

℅ MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

MICHAEL HIGGINS
EDITOR
PAT REDDING
MANAGING EDITOR
MICHAEL ROCKWITZ
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear Editor,

Let me say that I greatly enjoy seeing Conan portrayed the way he really should be. The character was never intended to be a milk and honey super hero, y'know.

However, my real reason for writing is the inference that you don't intend to follow R.E. howard's future portrayal of Conan. I.e., "Conan of the Isles." Please don't do this; as the creator of Conan, this is the respect that Howard deserves.

Besides, this was not the end of Conan. If I remember correctly, Conan simply tired of the easy life, and with the death of Zenobia and the coming of age of Prince Conn, he found that there was nothing left to keep him in Aquilonia, so he went in search of further adventures in the uncharted regions to the south. Besides, he was nearly seventy at the time, and he sure doesn't look seventy at the moment, does he?

Yours,
Peter Stringer
P.O. Box 721
Hamilton, New Zealand

We hear and obey, Peter.

Dear Dog Brothers,

Mayhaps you can answer these queries of mine.

1.) As you will have Conan and his family once again fighting magic, why don't you reintroduce the sorcerer Pelias? As he lives in Koth, he would certainly be affected by the war, and he has had good relations with Conan in the past.

2.) As Hyperborea and Brythunia have both joined with Ophir, Corinthia, and Koth against Conan, perhaps it is time for him to get some new allies. If I may suggest the kingdoms of Khoraja and Khauran, both of which Conan has had friendly dealings with in his past. Also, the bandits of the desert steppes (Kozaks?), in their thousands, would also be of great help.

3.) Over a year ago, you put out the OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE CONAN UNIVERSE, one issue long. Consider Conan's past and present, and how little we know about the Hyborian gods in relation to what you have printed about Odin, Zeus, Thor, and the others, the great and minor magi, the lands, the people, etc. An in-depth report on Conan and his family, friends, and a whole lot more could be written in a multi-issue offering — this not only could help, but it would be welcomed!

Respectfully,
Frederick Coff

Interesting ideas, F.C.; we'll consider them, of course!

Dear Don and Michael,

"The Spoils of Victory," issue #44 of CONAN THE KING, was a very fine issue. It does get a bit difficult to keep track of all the supporting cast without a score card, though. I think that this is a contributing factor to the success of this title. As Conan grew older and settled down, he surrounded himself with a group of loyal friends and followers. The interaction of all these characters is what separates this book from the other Conan titles. Some of my favorite characters are Prince Conn, Rufio, and Deryck. Now that Crassus is dead (can we ever be sure of that?), I think that Caliastros will make for an ample replacement. I especially liked the fact that you provided Caliastros with an instant background by tying him in with Rufio. The thought of Deryck and Prince Conn fighting a death duel has me anxiously awaiting next issue. If only you could change the bimonthly status of the book.

Charles S. Novinskie
415 30 Road
Grand Junction, CO 81504

We wish!

To Whom it May Concern,

CONAN THE KING #44 made me think of asking you to consider developing Conn more as an independent character.

The potential appeal of this character is enormous. He is Conan's son, but grew up privileged. But a man sired by Conan is of stock too good for a refined boyhood to have softened. You showed flashes of Conn's temper in CONAN THE KING #44 that could only have come from Conn inheriting Conan's genes. Might he not also be eager to inherit more than the courtly life? Both Conan and Kull acquired the easy life, entering into it as fully grown men. Witnessing the trend in reverse could be fascinating.

How: Let Conn be his own man. Give him a short fuse and a libido. Have him butt heads with Conan. One palace can't contain two such men. Don't avoid the issue by sending him to China or giving him amnesia. He's got to carve out a mark for himself in the world, and only wimps stand on their father's shoulders.

What: The gimmick is built in. The upbringing will tell as much as the bloodline. Make this man a master of his own desires. None of this should be caught up in twists of fate or in the seizing of opportunities. Conan became master of all he saw. Let Conn be master of himself. Perhaps young Conan as he was portrayed in "Red Nails," but with more confidence, in less of a hurry, and with more on his mind than gold, wine, and fear of superstition. It'll be hard. An Entwicklungsroman in the Hyborian Age! David Carradine's grasshopper with a sword and a temper. But I know you can do it. Just don't turn him into some noble Arthurian king who saved his old man's empire and then pontificated wisely all the rest of his days.

Sincerely,
mongo

As of our milestone issue #50, Conn will begin to grow his own. He will again have his own back-up feature in CONAN THE KING, and who knows what'll be up! Prince Conn, on his own, every issue! And the role of writer falls into the capable hands of James C. Owsley, who'll be bringing in a whole new excitement to the book!

Dear CTK,

I walked into the 7-11 and what did I see?
Deryck and Conn staring at me.
I picked it up and I looked inside
and, by Crom, that issue I did buy!
I did read it from one cover to the next
And forgot about my homework out of my math text!

Oh well, we had a sub that day anyway. Thanks for my 45th issue of CONAN THE KING, it was excellent. Could you please tell me how Conan became a king and who sat on the throne before him? I have read most of the novels in search of the answer, but I have come up with squat. Until Conan wields a cane instead of a sword, make mine Marvel!

Cory Prince

The answer to your question, Cory, will be revealed in CONAN THE KING #48, "The Winter of Discontent." Be there!

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE
STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION
(REQUIRED BY 39 U.S.C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: CONAN THE KING
2. Date of Filing: 5/89 6/10
3. Frequency of Issue: BI-MONTHLY
3A. No. of issues published annually: 6
3B. Annual subscription price: $15.00 12 issues
4. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Marvel Entertainment Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.
5. Complete address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publisher: Marvel Entertainment Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.
6. Full names and complete mailing address of publisher, editor, and managing editor: Stan Lee, Marvel Entertainment Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016. Editor: Tom DeFalco, Marvel Entertainment Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016. Managing Editor: Tom DeFalco, Marvel Entertainment Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016.
7. Owner (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.): NEW WORLD ENTERTAINMENT, LTD., 1440 South Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025.
8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None.
9. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (Section 411.3, DMM only). The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes: (Check one.) ( ) Have not changed during preceding 12 months ( ) Have changed during preceding 12 months. (If changed, publisher must submit explanation with this statement.)
10. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION.
A. Total No. Copies Printed (net press run): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 219,251. Single issue nearest to filing date: 208,487.
B. Paid Circulation: 1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 91,684. Single issue nearest to filing date: 88,565. 2) Mail subscriptions. Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 4,200. Single issue nearest to filing date: 4,102.
C. Total Paid Circulation. (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2): Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 95,917. Single issue nearest to filing date: 92,667.
D. Free Distribution by mail, carrier, or other means, samples, complimentary, and other free copies. Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 132. Single issue nearest to filing date: 131.
E. Total Distribution. (Sum of C and D). Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 96,049. Single issue nearest to filing date: 92,798.
F. Copies Not Distributed: 1) Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing. Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 885. Single issue nearest to filing date: 689. 2) Returns from News Agents. Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 122,317. Single issue nearest to filing date: 115,000.
G. Total (Sum of E, F1 and 2 should equal net press run shown in A). Average no. of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 219,251. Single issue nearest to filing date: 208,487.
11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.
(signed) Janet Pezzuto — Business Manager